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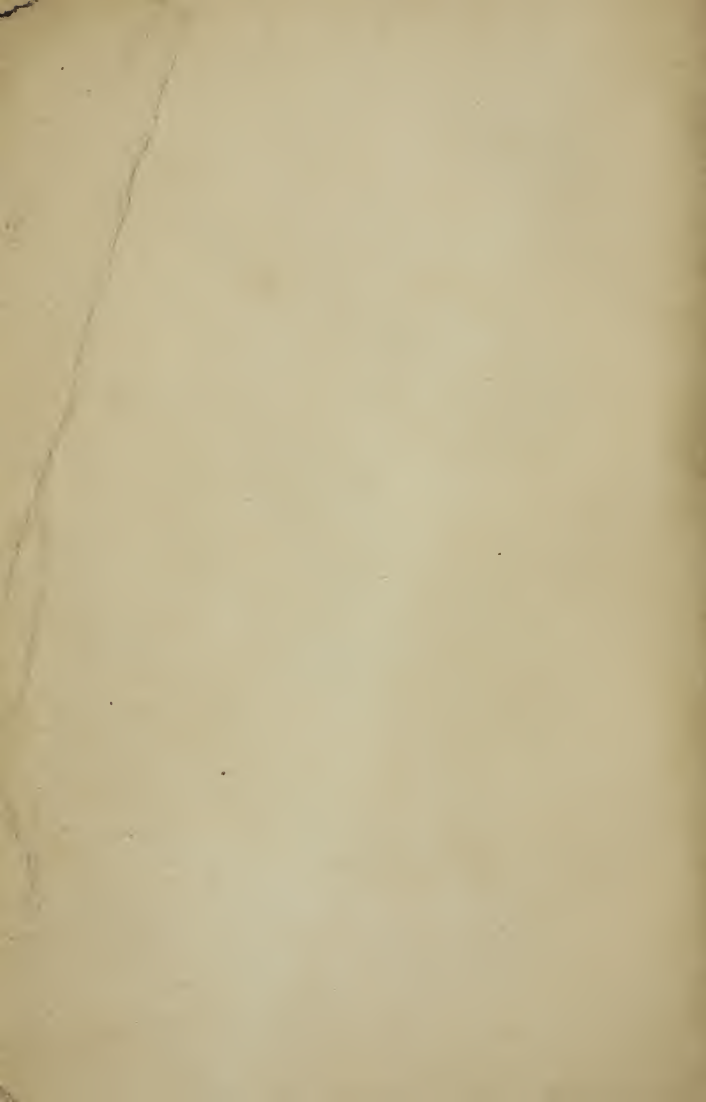
A
HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL MEMOIR
OF
THE O'CONNORS, KINGS OF CONNAUGHT,
AND THEIR DESCENDANTS.

COLLECTED FROM THE ANNALS OF IRELAND, AND AUTHENTIC
PUBLIC RECORDS.

BY
RODERIC O'CONOR, ESQ.,
BARRISTER AT LAW.

DUBLIN:
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P R E F A C E .

27 Nov 57 Albany
THE Author of the following pages having accidentally discovered that the late Mr. Mathew O'Connor, of Mount Druid, had induced his family to imagine themselves the *only* descendants of the ancient O'Connors of Connaught, and distinguished from other O'Connor families by the name *O'Conor*,* called on Mr. O'Connor, of Mount Druid (his son), to explain the grounds of so extravagant an assumption; no explanation, however, was given, although Mr. O'Connor re-

10 Sept 57 Comm
* O'Brien, in his Irish Dictionary, in his remarks on the letter *n*, states:—"But a double *nn* is rarely written in Irish, a little stroke being set over the letter instead of it, thus *n̄*. We find this manner was familiar to the Latins in ancient times, and, by the ignorance of some copyists and engravers, has made many words dubious; for they often omitted *n* where they should write it. It was thus the *n̄* was adopted in O'Coñor, to do away with the *affected* distinction, without compromising the true orthography of the name O'Connor."

lied on his father's statement, and insisted that it was sustained by a pedigree compiled by Charles O'Connor, "no indifferent genealogist." A correspondence ensued in the *Roscommon Weekly Messenger*, in which his brother, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, attempted to maintain the assumptions of his family, in an extremely offensive tone, without offering any evidence. In his letter he states, "*Sir Hugh O'Connor* had four sons; to *Calvach* (the eldest) he gave *Ballintubber*; to *Hugh* (the second) he gave *Clonalis*; to *Charles* (the third) he gave *Belanagare*; and to *Bryan* (the fourth) he gave *Beagh* and *Cloonycarney*." And he required to be informed "who *Bryan O'Connor*, the fourth son of *Sir Hugh O'Connor*, was married to? and evidence of his marriage, &c.? and who were the children? and when, and how, he lost his estates? and how it was proved he had children?" On his own part he stated that "*Owen O'Connor*, of *Belanagare*, became entitled to the estate (of *Clonalis*), he was the head of *Sir Hugh O'Connor Don's* descendants, and in him was vested all the remains

of Sir Hugh O'Connor's estates." The perusal of the following pages will show how unaccountably ignorant Mr. Arthur O'Connor was of his family and their possessions. But matters could not be left in so unsatisfactory a state. There was but one course open to meet such insinuations, or to deal with so unscrupulous an adversary. The case was brought before Sir Bernard Burke, Ulster King-of-Arms; and after a minute examination of all the evidence laid before him, and after hearing Mr. Arthur O'Connor on the subject, Sir Bernard, on the 11th June, 1855, granted a certificate, under the seal of his office, establishing the legitimate descent of the Ballycahir, Miltown, and Willsbrook families, from the ancient O'Connor family. At that period, no question was raised as to the descent of the Belanagare family, nor was it suspected that the pedigree deposited by the late Owen O'Connor in the office of the Ulster King-of-Arms was erroneous, or unsustainable. Subsequent discoveries have proved that it is erroneous in numerous instances, as well as the pedigree published

at the request of Mr. Mathew O'Connor, in O'Flaherty's "West Connaught," and O'Donovan's "Annals of the Four Masters." It is deemed expedient, under such circumstances, to preserve all the evidence that has been discovered, and place it within the reach of the widespread O'Connor family, in this concise Memoir of the O'Conors, Kings of Connaught, and their descendants, not in a spirit of unmeaning and silly gasconading, little in keeping with the sentiments of this enlightened age, but to do justice to all parties concerned. Nothing could be wiser or better said than what fell from Bishop Warburton, in the House of Lords, on the occasion of some angry dispute which had arisen between a peer of noble family and one of a new creation—"That high birth was a thing which he never knew any one disparage, except those who had it not; and he never knew any one make a boast of it, who had anything else to be proud of."*

* Bacon's Essays, by Whately—"As to Nobility in Particular Persons," p. 116.

THE O'CONNORS, KINGS OF CONNAUGHT.

IN this historical and genealogical Memoir of the O'Connors, Kings of Connaught, and their descendants, it is unnecessary to commence at an earlier period than the time of Turlogh *more* O'Connor, their common ancestor, who, in the beginning of the twelfth century, was elected King of *Siol Murray*, a royal territory in the present county of Roscommon, which comprised fourteen parishes, exclusive of those belonging to monasteries and laymen.* The principal chieftains of which were—the O'Connors of *Machaire Connacht*, an extensive plain lying between the towns

* O'Donovan's "Annals of Ireland," ad. ann. 1106, and "Liber Regalis Visitationis."

of Elphin and Roscommon, in extent from north to south; and the towns of Stokestown and Castlerea, in extent from east to west: O'Finaghty of *Clann Conway*, which comprised the Castle of Dunamon, on the River Suck, and forty-eight townlands in its immediate vicinity: O'Flanagan, of *Clann Cahill*, which comprised the parishes of Kilcorky, Shankill, and Kilmacumsey, with parts of the parishes of Creeve and Elphin, which formed the territory of O'Flanagan and O'Connor rue,* and Mageraghty, Chief of Muin-tir Rodiv.

Turlogh *more* O'Connor soon extended the too narrow limits of his diminutive kingdom, became King of Connaught, subdued Munster and Meath, and conferred the sovereignty of the latter on O'Melaghlin, from whom he took hostages. His victorious progress was rapid and extensive. It is recorded in the Annals of Clonmacnois, "that King Turlogh Mac Rowrie,

* O'Donovan's "Annals of Ireland," page 97, note b.

Monarch of Ireland, a great benefactor of the Church, and all spiritual men in general, and, in fine, a reliever and cherisher of the poor, died (A. D. 1156) at Dunmore, on the calends of June, in the sixty-eighth year of his age, and the fiftieth of his reign; after whose death, his son, Prince Rowrie, was invested in the government of Connaught, as king of that province, until Murrough Mac Neale O'Loughlin ended his reign, when Rowrie was promoted to the monarchie of Ireland." This Murrough Mac Neale O'Loughlin, who was descended from the O'Neills of Ulster, fell, in the year 1166, in a battle with the chieftains of his own territories, at *Luitir Luin*, in the county of Armagh, whereupon Rowrie (i. e. Roderic O'Connor) led a numerous army to Dublin, and was formally inaugurated Monarch of Ireland. From thence he proceeded towards the north, where he was received with due respect and submission. He deposed Dermot Mac Murchadh, King of Leinster, and conferred that province on another

member of his family, regulated the government of Munster, and afterwards held a general convention of the states at Tara, with unusual magnificence. It was thus that Roderic O'Connor commenced a reign ruinous to the independence, and destructive of the national existence of Ireland. Her strength was wasted in mischievous domestic strife; while a few Welsh adventurers were permitted to establish themselves on her coast, and lay the foundation of the scarcely-resisted occupation of the country. Roderic, after a feeble effort to maintain his regal authority, made his submission to Henry II., and agreed by treaty to do homage, and pay tribute for the province of Connaught, the last remnant of his kingdom. O'Brien of Thomond, worn out in fruitless opposition, followed Roderic's example; and both repaired, on the same day, to Raymond, the English General, gave him their hostages, and took the oaths of fealty.

Roderic's issue male became extinct at an

early period; one of his daughters, however, having married Hugh de Lacy, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, left a son, William, ancestor of Pierce de Lacy of Limerick, and of the Lynches of Galway, amongst the descendants of whom his representatives might, no doubt, be discovered; but as his brothers, Cathal *Crovderg* (the red-handed) and Brian *Lwighneach* (so called from having been fostered in Leyny, in the county of Sligo), were the ancestors of the O'Connors of Connaught, I shall at once pass to them and their descendants, and only notice others as they incidentally occur in the progress of this concise Memoir.

Cathal *Crovderg*, who—from his ardent desire to resist the encroachments of the English, and his military renown, became the idol of his countrymen—was, by the aid of a powerful faction, invested with the regal dignity of Connaught. He led his forces into Munster, laid the country waste, razed their castles and for-

tresses, and committed great devastation, without, however, gaining any permanent advantage. Such were his proceedings, when Cathal *Carrach* O'Connor, Roderic's grandson, rose against him, expelled him from the throne, established himself in authority, and maintained his position with gallantry and success, until the year 1201, when Cathal *Crovderg*, having gained the support of William Fitzandelm de Burgh, led an army into Connaught, and encamped near the Abbey of Boyle, in the county of Roscommon; Cathal *Carrach*, who was a brave and chivalrous prince, marshalled his provincial troops, and valiantly took the field. Both armies remained encamped near each other for several days, without venturing to hazard an engagement. Skirmishes occasionally ensued, in one of which Cathal *Carrach* O'Connor, who rashly took part in the conflict, was slain. This untoward event terminated the war, and Cathal *Crovderg* again seized the reins of government, and usurped the vacant throne. Being thus re-

established in authority, and sensible of the rapidly increasing power of the English, as well as of the insecurity of his own possessions in so unequal a contest, he wisely resolved on making peace, and gaining the support of the English government. He accordingly availed himself of the favourable opportunity afforded by the arrival of King John in Ireland, attended his court, made a formal submission, and, in conformity with ancient feudal principles, became his Majesty's liegeman and subject. King John, perhaps mistrusting the loyalty of so turbulent a prince, was desirous of having his son as a hostage for his fidelity; but Cathal preferred giving him O'Hara, Lord of Leyny, and Dermot, son of Mulroony of Moylurg, with others of less importance, and King John took them with him to England. Having thus established himself on the throne, Cathal *Crovderg* enjoyed a tranquil reign for the remainder of his life. He died in the year 1224, in the habit of a Grey Friar, at the Abbey of Knockmoy, in the county of

Galway, which he had himself founded,* upon which event, his son Hugh O'Connor seized on the reins of government, without awaiting the sanction of any authority, which caused great discontent, and eventually led to his own ruin. The sons of Roderic O'Connor (Turlogh and Hugh), availing themselves of the discontent that prevailed, rose up against him. They were favoured by O'Flaherty, Lord of West Connaught, and Mageraghty, and very generally by the Connacians, i. e. the Irish of Connaught. The English of that province were then under a separate government. In the following year, O'Neill of Ulster led an army into Connaught, professedly to aid the sons of Roderic, but in all probability to indulge in the barbarous spirit of

* It has been erroneously asserted that Cathal *Crovderg* was an illegitimate son of Turlogh more O'Connor, which, however, was not the case; for it is recorded in the "Annals of the Four Masters," that Dearbhorgaihl daughter of Domhnal, grandson of Loughlainn, King of Ireland, *wife* of Turlogh more O'Connor, King of Connaught, and *mother* of Ædh, *Cuthal*, and Domhnal, died on her pilgrimage at Ardmacha.—*O'Donovan's Annals of Ireland, ad ann.* 1151.

predatory warfare, which so universally prevailed amongst the Irish chieftains. He laid the country waste, took considerable booty, and plundered the Island of *Loch Nen*, or *Loch na n'ean* (the lake of the birds), in which the O'Connors in troubled times concealed their treasure, from whence, with other spoil, he carried off their jewels.* He then proceeded to *Carnfraech*, the place of inauguration of the ancient Kings of Connaught, whose principal palace was at Rathcroghan, in its immediate neighbourhood, and, as the annalists say, inaugurated Turlogh, Roderic's son, King of Connaught.† These inaugurations were more anciently im-

* This *Loch Nen* lay west of and adjoining the Castle of Roscommon. It is now a fertile turlagh, only occasionally flooded in the winter season. The island was an artificial one, constructed for the purpose of concealing valuable property. Its remains are still traceable in connexion with the castle.

† *Carnfraech*, now named *Carnfree*, near Tusk, in the parish of *Ogulla*, in the county of Roscommon, derives its name from *Fraech*, son of *Fiodhach*, who died at Rathcroghan, and was buried there.—See the *Parish of Ogulla*, in the sketch from the *Ordnance Survey Map annexed to this Memoir*.

portant ceremonies, accompanied by certain rustic forms, suited to the simple habits and customs of a primitive people, such as the delivery of a white rod, and the putting on of a shoe, in token of authority and obedience; but in more modern times (as on this occasion) they were tumultuous nominations by one faction or another, adopted to give the semblance of legality to an act of lawless violence.*

Having thus accomplished what Napoleon III. might call his mission, and not deeming it pru-

* Mr. Hardiman, in his edition of "Roderic O'Flaherty's West Connaught," tells the following curious tale, that "during one of the late agrarian disturbances, a deputation of the people waited on the late Mr. Matthew O'Connor, uncle of the O'Connor Don, and announced to him that, at a general meeting of the barony, it was proposed, and unanimously resolved, that he should be proclaimed King of Connaught. Not anticipating any dissent on his part from this wise resolve, the deputies respectfully requested him to appoint a time for the performance of the ceremony on the hill of Carnfree." Mr. Hardiman adds, that Mr. O'Connor himself related this circumstance to him; but, from the utter absurdity of the invention, it is manifest Mr. O'Connor never intended the story for publication.

dent to await the expected interference of the English government in support of the son of their deceased ally, O'Neill led off his marauding troops, leaving the discontented Connacians to sustain their hastily-inaugurated sovereign in the best manner they could.

In the mean time Hugh O'Connor, who, following his father's example, sought the aid of the English, was received by them with much favour; and Geoffrey de Marisco, then Lord Justice of Ireland, espoused his cause. His usurpation, however, which, as it superseded the elective character of the government, was no trivial offence, caused great disturbances throughout Connaught, and involved its wretched inhabitants in all the horrors of a barbarous civil war, in which they were indiscriminately plundered by both parties.

The annalists give a deplorable account of their sufferings and destitution; they say, "woe-

ful was the misfortune which God permitted to fall on the best province in Ireland at that time; for the young warriors did not spare each other, but preyed and plundered each other to the utmost of their power; women and children, the feeble and the lowly poor, perished by cold and famine in that war.”* Geoffrey de Marisco, who became the supporter of Hugh, accompanied him to the port of the Island of *Iniscreamha*, in *Loch Corrib*, in the county of Galway, and compelled O’Flaherty, Lord of West Connaught, and one of Hugh’s most inveterate enemies, to surrender his Islands of *Iniscreamha* and *Oilen na Circe*, and to deliver up his boats; and being aware that the Connacians were disaffected towards Hugh, left him a suitable force for his protection. The rapid success of this short campaign was of little importance to Hugh O’Connor, whose chief reliance was in the continued support of his English allies; and De Marisco

* Connellan’s “Annals of the Four Masters,” ad ann. 1225.

returned with his troops, laden with plunder, leaving Hugh to maintain his position with very inadequate means. His financial resources were more than doubtful; and to conciliate, and gain the confidence of the English, he handed over O'Flanagan, O'Teige, and other chiefs of Connaught, as hostages, to secure the pay of the soldiers engaged in his service, who were afterwards obliged to ransom themselves, as the Connacians expelled Hugh, and established Turlogh O'Connor, Roderic's son, on the throne of Connaught.

Turlogh seemed now firmly seated on the throne. He was freely elected, and an acknowledged favourite of the Connacians; but the never-failing disunion of his own family prevailed over all ordinary assurances; his brother Hugh rose up against him, expelled him from the throne, and assumed the reins of government, which he retained until Richard Mac William de Burgh (to whom Henry III. had

in this year, 1225, granted the province of Connaught) led an army into *Siol Murray*, and placed Felim O'Connor, son of Cathal *Crovderg*, on the throne. He afterwards capriciously restored Hugh to power; but Felim mustered his forces, and wrested the government from the descendants of Roderic, which they never afterwards recovered.

The Lords Justices and Viceroys of Ireland were not unwilling to promote disunion amongst the Irish chieftains, as it suited their own aggressive policy; hence they were easily prevailed upon to join one faction for the overthrow of another, which lowered the influence, and diminished the power of both. Thus, in the year 1242, Maurice Fitzgerald, Lord Justice of Ireland, led an army into *Machaire Connacht*, and plundered the possessions of Fiachra O'Flynn and Donogh Mac Dermot, two influential chieftains. And in the year 1249, the Lord Justice assembled a powerful army, composed of the

English of Leinster and Meath; and Mac Maurice Fitzgerald assembled another army, composed of the English of Munster and Connaught, and after marching through *Siol Murray*, and plundering the inhabitants, both armies met at Elphin, and elected Turlogh O'Connor (son of Hugh, son of Cathal *Crovderg*) King of Connaught.* Felim O'Connor, unable to resist so powerful an army, made his escape across the Shannon, and retired into Brefny and the north,† and thus avoided a ruinous collision with an overwhelming force. In the following year, when Turlogh was left to his own resources, Felim returned with an army raised in the north, dethroned Turlogh, and re-established himself in

* *Connellan's "Annals of the Four Masters," ad ann. 1249.*

† Ancient Brefny comprised the counties of Cavan and Leitrim, with portions of Meath, and the barony of Carbery, in the county of Sligo, of which the O'Rourkes were kings. It was afterwards reduced and divided into two principalities, *West* and *East* Brefny; the former consisted of Leitrim, with the barony of Tullaghagh, and part of the barony of Tullaghonoho, in the county of Cavan, and was named Brefny O'Rourke; the latter, which consisted of the remainder of Cavan, was named Brefny O'Reilly.

authority. He then made peace with the English, and obtained a patent from Henry III., granting him the King's five cantreds of land free of tribute or rent. Felim founded the monasteries of Roscommon and Tumona; and the annalists have recorded that "Felim O'Connor, son of Cathal *Crovderg*, the defender and supporter of his own province, and the expeller and plunderer of his foes, a man full of hospitality, prowess, and renown, died in the year 1265, in the monastery of the Dominican Friars at Roscommon."

There was a handsome monument erected to his memory in the Abbey of Roscommon, on which he was represented in a recumbent posture, holding a sceptre, with his feet upon a lion, with galloglasses sculptured on the face of the tomb, all in the same attitude, drawing their unwieldy swords. No inscription now appears upon this ancient monument, which has been shamefully defaced; its remains, however, may

still be seen in the picturesque ruins of the old abbey. The great popularity of Felim O'Connor secured the election of his son, Hugh, who succeeded him. He committed his regal depredation (a favourite achievement) in Offaly,* where he committed great devastation with perfect impunity, as no permanent forces were then maintained to resist such sudden and unexpected invasions. He afterwards marched into West Brefsny, deposed Art O'Rourke, lord of that country, and conferred the lordship on Connor *buidhe* (the swarthy) O'Rourke, Art's son. Hugh's reign was undistinguished by any memorable event. The annalists say:—

“Hugh, son of Felim, son of Cathal *Crovderg* O'Connor, King of Connaught, a prince who laid waste all parts of Connaught in possession of both English and

* This territory, under the O'Connors, Princes of Offaly, comprised the present baronies of Warrenstown and Coolestown, and part of Philipstown and Geashill, in the King's county, with the barony of Tinihinch, in the Queen's county, and those of East and West Offaly, in the county of Kildare, which still retain the names of the ancient principality.—*Connellan's "Annals of the Four Masters,"* p. 245, note ¹.

Irish enemies, who often defeated the English; who demolished their courts and castles, and slew their champions and warriors; who took the hostages of Hy-Briuin, and of the race of Hugh Fionn; a king who was most dreaded and victorious; the most eminent for hospitality and magnanimity; and who, though sometimes a spoiler, was also an improver of Ireland, died after the victory of repentance, on a Thursday, being the 3rd day of summer (A.D. 1274). Owen (son of Roderic, son of Hugh, son of Cathal *Crovderg*) was appointed king in his place; but he reigned only three months, when he was slain by one of his own kindred, namely, by Roderic (son of Turlogh, son of Hugh O'Connor) in the Church of the Friars, at Roscommon; and Hugh (the son of Cathal *dall* (the blind), son of Hugh, son of Cathal *Crovderg*) was elected King by the Connacians; but his reign was not long, being slain in a fortnight after by Mac Oiraghty (Tomaltagh) and O'Beirne; and Teige (son of Turlogh, son of Hugh, son of Cathal *Crovderg*) was appointed King over the Connacians."*

The absence of any hereditary right left the

* Connellan's "Annals of the Four Masters," ad ann. 1274.

throne within the grasp of the strongest faction, and rendered the accession of a new sovereign a period of unavoidable commotion, violence, and intrigue. Teige O'Connor was himself slain, in the year 1278, by the sons of Cathal Mac Dermot; when Hugh, an illegitimate son of Felim (son of Cathal *Crovderg*), was elected King of Connaught. The election of this Hugh O'Connor, in preference to the legitimate descendants of Cathal *Crovderg*, affords a striking instance of the utter disregard of all family claims in the choice of a sovereign for the province of Connaught.

In the year 1280, a contention arose between King Hugh and the descendants of Murtoigh *Muimhneach* O'Connor (so named from having been fostered in Munster), a son of Turloigh *more* O'Connor, who were from him denominated *The Clann Murtoigh*. They slew the king in the wood of Dangan, in the county of Galway; and at the same time made a prisoner of

Melaghlin, son of Manus (another son of Turlogh *more* O'Connor), whom O'Donnell ransomed for 400 cows and 20 horses. On this event, Cathal O'Connor, one of the *Clann Murtogh*, was elected King of the Connacians; and thus the sovereignty of Connaught was *again* taken from the descendants of Cathal *Crovderg*, and conferred on one of the *Clann Murtogh*, a troublesome race, then located in Brefny, of whose aggressive and warlike habits the annals of Ireland afford abundant evidence. In the year 1288, Manus O'Connor, brother of King Cathal, rose up against him, took him unawares at Bellaslishen-bridge, where he was encamped with some troops, made him prisoner, and usurped the reins of government, which he retained until 1293, when the annalists say—

“Manus, King of Connaught, a valiant warrior, the most dreaded, and the most illustrious of the Irish for bravery and hospitality in his time, died, after three months' illness; and Hugh O'Connor, son of Owen (who had been elected and slain in

1274), son of Roderic, son of Hugh, son of Cathal *Crovderg*, was appointed to succeed him.”*

He was afterwards deposed by his own tribe, who preferred the *Clann Murtogh*, and elected Cathal, son of Connor *ruadh* O'Connor, one of them to whom they gave their hostages. Upon this sudden and unforeseen defection of his own tribe, an army was raised for his defence, with which he encamped in *Kinel Dofa* (a district lying around Slieve bann, in the east of the county of Roscommon, of which the O'Hanlys were chiefs). He had summoned O'Flanagan, of *Clann Cahill*, and Mac Dermot, of Moylurg, to join his forces; and while they were engaged in making their preliminary arrangements, Cathal O'Connor, who had calculated on their support, made a revengeful incursion on Moylurg, and carried off some booty; whereupon MacDermot pursued him, and a skirmish ensued, in which Cathal was slain, and his own son,

* Connellan's "Annals of the Four Masters," ad ann. 1293.

Loughlin, taken prisoner, and handed over to the tender mercies of King Hugh, by whose command his eyes were put out. Thus peace was restored, and Hugh resumed his regal functions without further interruption from the fickle Connacians, or his own disaffected tribe. He was afterwards slain in East Brefny by one of the restless *Clann Murtoigh*; and his son, Felim O'Connor, was elected as his successor.*

In the year 1315, Edward Bruce landed in Ulster with 6000 well-disciplined soldiers, and committed great depredations on the possessions of the English, burned their towns, and massacred the inhabitants. Richard, Earl of Ulster (who was connected by descent with the O'Connors), raised a strong force to protect his extensive estates, and Felim O'Connor hastened to his assistance with his provincial

* This Hugh O'Connor was the common ancestor of the O'Connors *dun* and O'Connors *rue*. He had two sons, Turlogh, the ancestor of the former; and Felim, the ancestor of the latter.

*Letter of H. O'Connor accompanied him,
 arms, sword, &c. of Turlogh.
 & a great battle, after on a field against
 Earl of Ulster's forces, who were defeated.*

troops. In the mean time, Roderic O'Connor (son of Cathal, one of the *Clann Murtogh*), usurped his authority, and seized on the reins of government. This obliged Felim to retrace his steps, and return to quell the rebellion. The Earl, unable to keep the field against his victorious antagonist, also retreated into Connaught, where Sir John Bermingham followed him with reinforcements. Felim and Roderic met at *To-char mona Coinneadh*a (the bog-pass of the conference), which was so named from a conference held there between Felim, son of Cathal *Crovdery*, and Mac William de Burgh, in 1275, and is situated in the barony of Ballymoe, in the county of Galway, where they fought a fierce battle, in which Roderic O'Connor, with many of the chiefs of Connaught, and of his galloglasses, were slain, and thus ended Roderic's ill-concerted rebellion. Felim, however, resolved on deserting his allies, and joining the victorious Bruce. O'Brien of Thomond (the counties of Limerick and Clare), and other in-

fluent chiefs of Munster, followed his example, and the clergy preached up Bruce as the deliverer of their country. In the mean time the English government, aware of Felim's hostile intentions, sent a strong force to subdue him, while he lost no time in preparing to sustain a cause he enthusiastically adopted. He raised a powerful army, and the principal chieftains of Connaught, with Donogh O'Brien, and the chiefs of Munster, O'Melaghlin, King of Meath, O'Rourke, Lord of Brefny, O'Farrell, of Annaly.* O'Kelly, of Hy-Maine,† and Manus, son of Donal, tanist of North Connaught, with their respective forces, came to his aid. Both ar-

* Annaly comprised the county of Longford, the territory of the O'Farrells; their chief residence was at Longford, anciently named Longphart ni Fhearghail (the fortress of O'Farrell). It was divided into Upper and Lower Annaly. The former lay south of Granard, comprised part of Westmeath, and was possessed by O'Farrell *buidhe* (the swarthy); the latter lay north of Granard, and was possessed by O'Farrell *bann* (the fair).—*Connellan's "Annals of the Four Masters,"* p. 9, note 7.

† Hy-Maine was an extensive territory, comprising a great part of South Connaught, in the present county of Galway, and was afterwards extended beyond the River Suck to the Shannon, in



PHELM O'CONNOR.

(KING OF CONNAUGHT)

Killed at the Fatal Battle of Athenree,

A. D. 1315.

J. Owen Lith. 8, Anglessea St. Dub.

mies met on the 16th August, 1316, at Athenry, in the county of Galway, where they fought a sanguinary and fatal battle, in which the Irish were defeated, with a loss, it is said, of 10,000 men, with numerous chiefs of Connaught, Munster, Meath, and Brefny; and the chivalrous Felim was amongst the slain. The Connacians, though unable to rally their forces after so signal a defeat, hastily elected Roderic *na bhfeadh* (of the woods), Felim's uncle, King of Connaught.* They, however, in the following year, chose Turlogh O'Connor, Felim's brother, king, in his stead.

The annalists have recorded that a great army was then raised by Mac Dermot of Moylurg, Turlogh O'Connor (King of Connaught),

the county of Roscommon. It comprehended the baronies of Ballymoe, Tyaquin, Killian, and Kilconnell, with part of Clonmacnoon, in the county of Galway, and the barony of Athlone, in the county of Roscommon. The O'Kellys were styled Princes of Hy-Maine.—*Idem*, page 127, note ¹¹.

* Connellan's "Annals of the Four Masters," ad ann. 1316.

O'Rourke of Brefny, O'Kelly of Hy-Maine, and Tomaltagh MacDonagh of Tirerrill (now Tiraghrill, a barony in the county of Sligo, adjoining the barony of Boyle, in the county of Roscommon), with which they marched to *Fossa coille* (a woody district in the barony of Carbury, in the county of Sligo) against Cathal O'Connor (son of Donal, from whose brother, Murtoagh, Sir Calbhach (i. e. Sir Charles) O'Connor, Sligo, was descended), who, though encamped in a secure position, besought them to depart in peace, at the same time tendering valuable presents as peace-offerings to his unexpected assailants, which they, however, disdainfully rejected, when a sanguinary engagement ensued, in which Bryan, son of Turlogh O'Connor, Connor O'Kelly of Hy-Maine, Bryan Mac Manus, Cathal, son of Gilcreest Mac Dermot, and others of less note, were slain by Cathal O'Connor and his people, who made a valiant and successful defence. Cathal O'Connor then collected his forces, and, as the anna-

lists say, marched them against Mac Dermot and "The O'Connor," committed great depredations in Moylurg, deposed Turlogh O'Connor, and assumed the sovereignty of Connaught, which he maintained against both his English and Irish opponents, until the year 1324, when he was slain by Turlogh (the deposed king), who was then reinstated in authority; but in the year 1342, all the Sil Murray (i. e. the O'Connors of *Machaire Connacht*, who were so named) rose up against him, and banished him from his possessions; when Hugh, son of Hugh *Breafneach* O'Connor, one of the restless *Clann Murtoigh*, was elected in his place by Mac William de Burgh* and the Connacians. On this occasion the tanistship was conferred upon Hugh, son of Felim O'Connor. The *Clann Murtoigh*, who theretofore were located in Brefny, were, in the year 1343, expelled from thence by ORourke, Turlogh O'Connor, and Mac Rannall, and went

* The leader of this clann was styled "The Mac William," from his descent from William Fitzandelm de Burgh.

into the county of Donegal, where O'Donnell received them with much favour, and made them a grant of the barony of Tirhugh, in that county. They were probably serviceable to him in his wars, as fighting seems to have been their ordinary vocation; for wherever it was going on, whether in the bogs of Mayo, the mountains of Sligo, or the plains of Roscommon, the *Clann Murtoigh O'Connors* had their share in the fight, and their portion of the spoil. Turlogh O'Connor, the deposed King of Connaught, was killed at *Fedara*, in Brefsny, where he went to assist Mac Rannall against his inveterate enemies the *Clann Murtoigh*, with whom Mac Rannall was then at war; whereupon Hugh, Turlogh's son, was elected king by *his own party*; but Hugh, son of Hugh *Brefneach*, continued in power until slain by Hugh O'Rourke, when the O'Hanlys, Mac Brannans, and O'Monahans, elected Hugh, son of Felim, King of the Irish of Connaught. However, as Hugh, son of Turlogh, obtained the government, they gave him their

hostages ; and the claims of Hugh, son of Felim, were postponed until his death, which occurred in the year 1356, when Hugh, son of Felim, was elected, and continued in power until the year 1368, when Roderic O'Connor, son of Turlogh, was elected King of Connaught.*

At this period the Castle of Ballintubber belonged to the descendants of Turlogh O'Connor (ancestor of the O'Connors *dun*), and the Castle of Roscommon to the descendants of Felim O'Connor (ancestor of the O'Connors *rue*) ; for it is recorded by the annalists† that the Castle of Roscommon was given to Roderic O'Connor, and the Castle of Ballintubber, *with other considerations*, to Turlogh O'Connor, grandson of Felim O'Connor, *in lieu thereof*. This Roderic O'Connor fought a sanguinary battle with Mac William de Burgh and Malachy O'Kelly, lord of Hy-Maine in 1377, at Roscommon, in which

* Connellan's "Annals of the Four Masters," ad ann. 1368.

† Ad. ann. 1375.

Richard, brother of Mac William de Burgh; Donal, son of Cathal oge O'Connor; Teige oge, son of Teige O'Kelly; O'Mannin, and Mac Dugal of the galloglasses, with many others, were slain. He also made an incursion on Moylurg, where he committed great devastation, and many were slain on both sides. The O'Connors were at this period engaged in bitter strife and dissension. Roderic unscrupulously plundered the grandsons of Felim O'Connor: he even deprived them of their Castle of Ballintubber, for which he had received the more important Castle of Roscommon, and restored it to his own family, who retained it from thence to the seventeenth century. On the other hand, Bryan *ballagh* (the freckled) O'Connor, one of the grandsons of Felim O'Connor, took Cathal O'Connor, son of Roderic, prisoner, together with O'Beirne and O'Hanly (at *Beol an Tochair*, in the county of Roscommon), and kept them in confinement until he obtained his own terms for their ransom from "O'Connor," when

peace was concluded. The annalists have recorded that—

“ Roderic, son of Turlogh O’Connor, King of Connaught, died of the plague on the eve of St. Catherine’s festival (A. D. 1384), having reigned King of Connaught sixteen years and three months, as stated in the poem, *Reim Riograidhe* (the Catalogue of Kings)—

“ For three months and sixteen years
The Royal Roderic held the rule
At Croghan, in honour free from contest,
The son of Turlogh fierce in conflict.”

The annalists say, after the death of Roderic O’Connor—

“ Two lords were elected in Connaught, viz., Turlogh oge, son of Hugh, son of Turlogh, was appointed to the government by O’Kelly, *Clann Rickard* (the Clann Rickard were the descendants of Rickard *more de Burgh*, son of William Fitzandelm de Burgh), Donal, son of Murtagh O’Connor, and also by the Mac Donaghs. And Turlogh *ruadh*, son of Hugh, son of Felim, son of Hugh, son of Owen, was appointed to the government in like manner by Mac Dermot, the

Clann Murtogh *muimhneach* (O'Connors), and by the other chiefs of Siol Murray, in consequence of which a war broke out all over Connaught."*

Professor Connellan, a distinguished Celtic scholar, the first translator of the "Annals of the Four Masters," in his interesting and able work on the Irish Bards, mentions, in reference to the cognomen *caech*, applied to the King of Leinster, that "the Kings of Brefny and Oirgiall were named *dubh* (black, or dark), and *fionn* (fair), from the colour of their hair." And he adds, "that all the higher families that sepa-

* Connellan's "Annals of the Four Masters," ad ann. 1384. These territorial lords were analogous to our landlords, and not to our nobility, and bore no title whatever; and they became, as might be expected, inveterate enemies, and the leaders of hostile factions. However, as they bore the same name (*Turlogh O'Connor*), they were distinguished from each other by the cognomens or nicknames, *pucc* (*ruadh*), *red*, and *donn* (*doun*), *dun*, or *brown-coloured*, taken from the colour of their hair, which was then very usual in Irish and Scottish families ("Illustrations, Historical and Genealogical, of King James's Irish Army List," by John D'Alton, Esq., vol. i., p. 139). In every grade of chieftainship, each was denominated *lord* over his dependants, i. e. those from whom he exacted tribute or military service in his wars, or faction fights.

rated into two or more branches, had their distinguishing branch names, and their chiefs bore them as part of their titles. Thus, in the royal family of the O'Connors, Kings of Connaught, which separated into two branches in the fourteenth century, the chiefs were styled O'Connor *donn* (or the brown-haired), and O'Connor *ruadh* (or the red-haired). The Mac Carthys, Princes of Desmond, were also separated into two great *clanns*, the chiefs of whom were styled McCarthy *mor* and McCarthy *riabhach*.* Thus all the descendants of Turlogh O'Connor *dun* were indiscriminately styled "The O'Connors *dun*," and the descendants of Turlogh O'Connor *ruadh* were in like manner styled "The O'Connors *rue*;" and the elected chieftains, "The O'Connor *dun*," and the O'Connor *rue*.† Dr. O'Donovan, in his translation of the "Annals of the

* Imtheacht na Tromdhaimhe, "Transactions of the Ossianic Society," vol. v., p. 113, note 5.

† These Irish words, *donn* and *ruadh*, are rendered in O'Brien's Irish Dictionary as signifying *dun*, or *brown colour*, and *reddish-colour*, and the word *dun*, as signifying *mischief*.

Four Masters," in which he gives the Irish text, translates "Donnchadh *donn*," Donnchadh, *the brown-haired*;* and yet he translates "O'Conchobhair *donn*," O'Conor *Don*, thereby perverting the plain meaning of the text he undertook to translate, to gratify the "worthy friend" under whose guidance he gives so erroneous an account of the O'Connors of Ballintubber, without disclosing his authority.

In the year 1406, Turlogh O'Connor *dun* was slain by Cathal O'Connor *dubh* (the black-haired), son of Turlogh O'Connor *ruadh* (the red-haired); and, after his death, Cathal O'Connor (a cousin of his) was conveyed to Carnfree, by Bryan O'Connor (of Sligo) and the clann Mac Donogh (of Sligo), and elected in his place. In the following year, Bryan O'Connor entered *Machaire Connacht*, and demolished the Castle of Tulsk, which belonged to a branch of

* Ad ann. 919, note 1.

the O'Connors *rue*; and in the year 1410, the sons of O'Connor *dun* carried off considerable booty from the people of O'Connor *rue*. In 1426, O'Connor *rue* died; and in 1434, O'Kelly of Hy-Maine, Mac Dermot of Moylurg, and Teige O'Connor, son of Turlogh O'Connor *rue*, made an attack on Ballintubber, where they and the people of the town fought a battle, in which, the annalists say, "many persons were killed and wounded both inside and outside of the town."* Thus the O'Connors continued their predatory warfare from generation to generation. In the year 1439, Cathal O'Connor died, whereupon new disturbances arose; Teige O'Connor *rue* was nominated "The O'Connor" by his party; and Hugh, son of Turlogh O'Connor *dun*, was nominated "The O'Connor" by Bryan O'Connor (of Sligo) and the Mac Donoghs of Sligo.†

* Connellan's "Annals of the Four Masters," ad ann. 1426 and 1434.

† Idem ad ann. 1439.

In the year 1461, Felim *Fionn* (the fair) O'Connor, a grandson of Turlogh O'Connor *rue*, was taken prisoner by his own kinsmen, the sons of Bryan *ballagh* (the freckled) O'Connor, and Roderic O'Connor, son of O'Connor *dun*, and great commotion ensued in *Siol Murray*. Mac William de Burgh (i. e. Edward, brother of Richard Mac William, Lord of the English of Connaught, then styled "the Mac William") and his kinsmen led an army into *Machaire Connacht* to release Felim *Fionn* from the son of Bryan *ballagh*, and they gave him his own demand, and the chieftains of Connaught as guarantees for the payment. When Felim *Fionn* was set at liberty, he took them with him to *Carnfree*, where he was inaugurated; and Mac Dermot put on his shoe, in token of obedience. In the year 1468, he plundered O'Connor, the descendant of Turlogh O'Connor *dun*, and carried off the booty to Moylurg, the district of the Mac Dermots, his allies, who usually accompanied him in his maraud-

ing incursions; and in the same year he and Mac Dermot committed, as the annalists say, “excessive depredations at Ballintubber;” but “O’Connor,” with his tribes, pursued and overtook him at *Scormore*, in the parish of *Kilmacumsey*, in *Clann Cahill*,* where Felim *Fionn* and Mac Dermot were reinforced by the sons of Dermot, son of Roderic Mac Dermot, and the sons of Cormac oge Mac Dermot, who were encamped at *Beala Coille* (i. e. at Belanagare), when they valiantly and victoriously turned on their pursuers, defeated and dispersed them, and carried off the spoil.†

The precise local position of *Beala Coille* is satisfactorily fixed at Belanagare, by the topographical information collected in the progress of the Ordnance Survey of Ireland, on which (amongst others) John O’Donovan (who has

* See the map, taken from the Ordnance Survey of the county of Roscommon, annexed to this Memoir.

† Connellan’s “Annals of the Four Masters,” ad ann. 1468.

since obtained an honorary degree of Doctor of Law from Trinity College, Dublin, and the professorship of the Celtic Languages in the Queen's College, at Belfast), now Dr. O'Donovan, was employed. In a note of his, appended to the foregoing passage, he states—

“ *Beala Coille* (i. e. the road, or pass, in the wood), now *Ballaghcullia*, is a townland in the parish of *Kilcorkey*, and barony of Castlerea, in the county of Roscommon; bounded on the south by the townland of *Belanagare*.”

And adds—

“ Traces of the ancient *beala* (or road), from whence the townland derives its name, were pointed out to him, by old Cormac Brennan, who had been steward to the late (Owen) *O'Conor Don*.”*

In the year 1474, on the death of *Felim geangach O'Connor*, a son of *Turlogh O'Connor dun*, two lords were *again* appointed over *Siol*

* O'Donovan's “Annals of the Four Masters,” ad ann. 1468, note ^k.

Murray, namely, Donogh *dubhshuileach* (the dark-eyed) O'Connor, uncle of Felim *Fionn*, and Teige O'Connor (one of the O'Connors *dun*). The annalists say that, in 1487, the sons of Felim *Fionn* (Hugh, Connor, and Turlogh) plundered and burned Ballintubber; and that a portion of the territory of *Clann Cahill*, which had been in the possession of the *Clann Maolruain*, was given to Felim *Fionn*. Dr. O'Donovan also states that—

“O'Connor *rue*, in the fourteenth century, crippled the power and circumscribed the territory of O'Flanagan so, that his territory was found to be very insignificant in the reign of Elizabeth.”*

In the year 1488, the annalists say,—

“Donagh *dubhshuileach* (the dark-eyed) O'Connor, i. e. O'Connor *rue*, died at an advanced age, after a well-spent life; and Felim *Fionn* O'Connor was inaugurated his successor by O'Donnell, Mac William,

* O'Donovan's “Annals of the Four Masters,” ad ann. 1487 and 1289, note ^a.

and Mac Dermot, i. e. Connor, as firmly as any lord who had been appointed for a long time before; and his shoe (of inauguration) was put on him by Mac Dermot.”*

In the following year, as the annalists have recorded,—

“O'Connor *rue* (i. e. Felim *Fionn*) marched an army to Ballytober Bride (i. e. Ballintubber of St. Bridget), and demolished the bawn of the town; and thereupon, the chieftains of the race of Teige oge, namely, O'Flynn, Mac Keherny, and O'Mulbrenan, came into his house, and gave hostages.”

And

“O'Connor (i. e. Hugh O'Connor, of Ballintubber) led an army to *Bel Coille*, and cut down the road, and obtained hostages from the inhabitants of Air-teach.”†

Charles O'Connor of Belanagare, (son of Denis

* Connellan's "Annals of the Four Masters," ad ann. 1488, and "Tribes and Customs of Hy Fiacrach," p. 451.

† O'Donovan's "Annals of the Four Masters," ad ann. 1489.

O'Connor, of Killintrany, in the county of Sligo), appended the following memorandum to the foregoing passage in the autograph of the Four Masters, preserved in the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin,—“Bel Coille mo dhunarus ma bhfuilim ag leigheadh an leabhair so anocht, Nou. 13, MDCCLXXU” (Bel coille, my habitation, in which I am reading this book, this night, the 13th Nov. 1775). Charles O'Connor's house, called Hermitage, from which he dates many of his letters, stands on this townland; and, according to tradition, is the boundary between the territories of *Airteach* and *Clann Cahill*.* This is a significant and important record of the latter end of the fourteenth century, in relation to the then local position of O'Connor *rue*, in the parish of *Kilcorkey*, at the northern extremity of the barony of Ballintubber, and of O'Connor *dun*, at the southern extremity of the same barony.†

* *Idem*, note 7.

† See Map, taken from the Ordnance Survey of the Co. Roscommon, annexed to this Memoir.

Dr. O'Donovan's notes, and Charles O'Connor's memorandum, demonstrate that Bel Coille, now Ballaghcullia, was part of the Belanagare estate, which, at that period, formed part of the extensive possessions of Felim *Fionn* O'Connor *rue*, against whom Hugh of Ballintubber made his retaliatory and revengeful incursion, as recorded by the Four Masters.

The pass in the wood was, no doubt, a place of considerable importance to a marauder of Felim *Fionn's* predatory habits. The annalists have recorded that—

“ O'Connor *rue*, i. e. Felim *Fionn*, the son of Teige, son of Turlogh O'Connor *rue*, a brave and warlike man, *who spread terror in every country about him*, and a man whom the Siol Murray expected would unite all Connaught, died on Easter Monday, in the house of MacGeraghty, and was interred in the tomb of his ancestors, at Roscommon; and that Roderic, son of Felim O'Connor (of Connaught), an O'Connor *rue*, was inaugurated as the successor of Felim *Fionn*.”

They also say, that,—

“Roderic, i. e. O’Connor *rue*, son of Felim O’Connor, an affable man in peace, and a valiant man in war, died in 1492, after a long and well-spent life, and was interred at Tulsk.”*

It appears that the next person who assumed the appellation of “O’Connor *rue*” (the mummery of a *Carnfree inauguration* being no longer maintained) was Hugh, son of Felim *Fionn* O’Connor; for the annalists say that O’Connor *rue*, i. e. Hugh, son of Felim *Fionn*, with several of the chiefs of Connaught, joined the Lord Justice, Gerald, son of Thomas, Earl of Kildare, who marched a powerful army against Mac William of Clannrickard, and fought the celebrated and sanguinary battle of *Knock Tuagh*, in the county of Galway, in which he completely defeated Mac William’s army, and brought his

* Connellan’s “Annals of the Four Masters,” ad ann. 1490 and 1492.

two sons and his daughters as prisoners to Galway.*

This Hugh O'Connor *rue* was succeeded by Owen O'Connor *rue* (another son of Felim *Fionn*), who died in the year 1519,† and was succeeded by Teighe *buidhe* (the swarthy) O'Connor *rue*, who died in 1534, and was succeeded by his son Turlgh O'Connor *rue*, who was nominated the O'Connor.‡

In the year 1542, Mac William of Clanrickard, *Ulic na g cean* (Ulic of the heads), and Mac William de Burgh, led an army into *Clann Cahill*, the territory of O'Flanagan and O'Connor *rue* (consisting of the parishes of Kilcorkey,

* Connellan's "Annals of the Four Masters," ad ann. 1504.

† Idem, ad ann. 1519.

‡ Idem, ad ann. 1534. Teighe *buidhe* O'Connor *rue* was the son of Cathal *rue* O'Connor, who died in 1488, son of Roderic, son of Bryan *ballagh* (the freckled) son of Hugh, son of Turlogh O'Connor, the first O'Connor *rue*. Turlogh O'Connor *rue*, here named the O'Connor, was lineally descended from the first O'Connor *rue*.

Shankill, and Kilmacumsey, and parts of the parishes of Creeve and Elphin*), and took the town of O'Flanagan, at *Bel-atha-Uachtain* (Ballyoughter), a townland in the parish of Shankill, in *Clann Cahill*.

In the year 1585, an Irish parliament was assembled at Dublin, and a proclamation issued, commanding the Irish chieftains to attend. The annalists say—

“Thither went the Sil Murray, with their dependants, namely, the son of O'Connor *dun*, i. e. Hugh, son of Dermot, son of Carbry, son of Owen, *Caech*, son of Felim *geangach* (the crooked); — O'Connor rue, i. e. Teige oge, son of Teige *buidhe*, son of Cathal rue; — O'Connor, Sligo, i. e. Donal, son of Teige, son of Cathal oge, son of Donal, son of Owen, son of Donal, son of Murtoogh.”†

* See map, taken from the Ordnance Survey of the county of Roscommon, annexed to this Memoir.

† Connellan's "Annals of the Four Masters," ad ann. 1585. This Murtoogh was the son of Donal, son of Teige, son of Brian, son of Andrew, son of Bryan Luighneach, son of Turlogh more

This Parliament was prorogued on the 29th of May, 1585; and on the 15th of July following, Sir John Perrot, Lord Deputy of Ireland, issued a commission, directed to Sir Richard Bingham, Governor of Connaught, and others, on which they made the following proposal, “that the chieftains of countries, gentlemen and freeholders of the province of Connaught, should grant unto the Queen, her heirs and successors, ten shillings English, or a mark Irish, upon every quarter of land containing 120 acres, that bears horn or crop, in lieu of other cess (save as therein excepted).”

On this proposal, inquisitions were taken, preparatory to making such compositions; and, amongst others, an inquisition was taken at Roscommon on the 2nd of October, 1585, before Sir Richard Bingham and Sir Nicholas White,

O'Connor, the already-named common ancestor of all the O'Connors, Kings of Connaught, since the year A. D. 1106. *Idem*, ad ann. 1307 and 1329.

in relation to the estates of Mac Dermot, of Moylurg, and the O'Connors *rue* and *dun*; on which a jury of *sixteen* was empanelled, and amongst whom we find *Owen O'Connor, of Belanagare, Esq.*, was sworn, and served as juror on the said inquisition. By an Indenture of Composition, bearing date the 3rd day of October, 1585, in the 29th year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, made between Sir John Perrot, Knight, Lord Deputy-General of Ireland, for and on behalf the Queen's most excellent Majesty, *on the one part*, and the Lords, Chieftains, Gentlemen, Freeholders, and inhabitants of the countries, rectories, and territories of Moylurg, alias the Mac Dermot's country, and O'Connor *rue*'s country, and O'Connor *dun*'s country, therein named; amongst whom are enumerated the Rev. Father in God William, Archbishop of Tuam; John, Bishop of Elphin; Hugh O'Connor, of Ballintubber, otherwise called O'Connor *dune*, chief of his name; Bryan Mac Dermot, of Carrick (i. e. the rock), chief

of his name; Cahill oge Mac Mulroony, of Eden; Cahill Mac Toole, of Castlerea; Teige O'Flynn, of Slieve O'Flynn, chief of his name; and Bryan O'Flanagan, of Ballyoughter, chief of his name. *On the other part*—They, the chieftains, gentlemen, freeholders, and inhabitants of the said countries, rectories, and territories, for themselves, their heirs, and assigns, granted to the said Sir John Perrot, Lord Deputy of Ireland, and his heirs, to the use of her Majesty the Queen, and her heirs and successors for ever, one yearly rent-charge of ten shillings per quarter out of the said lands. And it was, amongst other things, concluded and agreed that the names, styles, and titles of chieftainship theretofore used by the said chieftains and gentlemen, together with all elections and customary divisions of land, occasioning great strife and contention, should be utterly abolished within the said Mac Dermot's, O'Connor rue's, and O'Connor dune's countries, for ever; but that their lands should lineally de-

scend from father to son, according to the course and order of the laws of England.

Sir Donal O'Connor, Sligo, and the chieftains of his country, executed a similar deed of composition, dated 23rd September, 1585, in which he is styled "Sir Donyll O'Connor, of Sligo, Knight," to which he subscribed his name as "Sir Donell O'Connor, Slegoe."*

It is manifest, from the foregoing narrative, that the sovereignty of Connaught was *elective*, and never claimed in right of inheritance. Nor was it retained in any one branch of the O'Connor family. The sons of Roderic, the descendants of Cathal *Crovderg*, and Bryan *Lwighneach*; the *Clann Murtogh*; and even the illegitimate son of Felim, son of Cathal *Crovderg*, had each their share in the regal sway of Connaught.

It was in later times the treacherous policy

* Hardiman's "West Connaught," p. 346.

of England, and the baneful effect of the penal laws against Roman Catholics, to efface all traces of descent from those whose estates were unjustly confiscated. The Irish Roman Catholics, and their persecuted clergy, were reduced to the degrading condition of an extra-parochial people in their own native land, living by sufferance, and even praying by stealth. No registries of births or marriages could be kept, under such circumstances; and the *ordinary* legal proofs of descent were nowhere to be found. Some families, however, retained traditional accounts of their ancestors, corroborated by evidence sufficiently satisfactory for their purposes. Circumstantial evidence—being admissible even in criminal cases, involving the highest penalties of the law—may well be received in questions of descent, where it forms the best evidence that can be produced, and that the nature of the case affords.

An effort was made some years since to bring

down the pedigrees of certain ancient families from the sixteenth century to their existing representatives, for literary purposes, to make capital for modern genealogists, which resulted in the publication of erroneous pedigrees; and amongst others, of one, of the O'Connors of Balintubber; it is, therefore, incumbent on me to notice the course pursued, and the cause of its failure. It has been already mentioned that persons were employed on the Ordnance Survey of Ireland, to ascertain the names of townlands, with which such of the old inhabitants as were acquainted with the Irish language were alone familiar, and that John O'Donovan (now Dr. O'Donovan) was so employed. An office was established in Dublin, with which these persons were in constant communication; and George Petrie (now Dr. Petrie), an eminent artist, took charge of the office, and directed their proceedings. It appears to have occurred to him that *historical* and *genealogical* information, for a series of speculative and profitable publications,

might be collected in the progress of the Ordnance Survey; and his letters to John O'Donovan afford the best explanation of his views, and the course he adopted. In one of them, dated 19th July, 1837, he gives him the following instructions:—

“ I have thought it prudent to have my copy of the O'Kelly genealogy translated for you, as, though the O'Kellys are more connected with Galway than Roscommon, it will be useful to the *historical collection* for the latter, and particularly for the district where you now are. It will show you in what way Mr. D. H. Kelly claims the title of the chief of the name, a claim which is not generally allowed him. On the contrary, Mr. Festus O'Kelly, of Ticooly (a Count of the Roman empire), is the generally acknowledged representative. He is O'Kelly of Gallagher; Denis H. O'Kelly is O'Kelly of Scrine; you will find both lines in the pedigree, and you can *easily* complete them.”*

* Professor Connellan, in his work (already quoted) on “ the Bards of Ireland,” states “ that the Mac Egans of Ballymacegan were chief Brehons of the O'Kellys, Princes of Hy-Maine, in the counties of Galway and Roscommon, which princely family is now

In another letter, dated July 7, 1837, he writes as follows:—

“MY DEAR JOHN,—I have the pleasure of sending you a note of introduction to Mr. Mat O’Conor (of Mt. Druid), the head of his race, according to the Brehon law, and whose acquaintance I was so fortunate as to make *lately*. I have no doubt but that you will find him as willing as he is able to give you aid *in your researches*; for he is in every respect a fit representative of the house of *O’Conor*.

“Yours sincerely,

“GEORGE PETRIE.”

It appears from a letter written by John O’Donovan to George Petrie, dated 14th July, 1837, that he availed himself of the foregoing introduction, for in this letter he states,—

“Yesterday, Mr. Mat O’Conor and four of his family accompanied me to Rathcroghan, the royal palace of Connaught. We examined every feature of

represented by Denis H. Kelly, of Castlekelly, Esq., an eminent Celtic scholar,” Introduction, p. xxvi.

the land *with great enthusiasm and interest*. Mr. Arthur O'Connor tells a story, which I can hardly believe, that a negro was one day passing through Belanagare, and that the people, taking him for the Devil, followed him with pitchforks to kill him. They might have done so three hundred years ago, but scarcely now!"*

Dr. O'Donovan wrote several Pedigrees of families in the county of Roscommon, while *en route* on the Ordnance Survey, and we find amongst them a very significant one for *O'Conor Don*: it is given by him in the following form:—

1. Denis O'Conor Don, M. P.
2. Owen O'Conor Don.
3. Denis O'Conor of Belanagare.
4. Charles O'Conor, the Venerable.

* This Mr. Mat O'Conor was the gentleman upon whose authority Mr. Weld, in his statistical survey of the county of Roscommon, and Mr. Hardiman, in "O'Flaherty's West Connaught," and O'Donovan, in his "Annals of the Four Masters," published their erroneous pedigrees of the O'Connor family, *representing that the O'Conors of Belanagare and Mt. Druid were the only remains of the O'Connors of Ballintubber.*

5. Donagh *Liath*.[*Denis O'Connor, of Killintrany.*]

Supply from
Common-place
Book.

Hugh.

[Sir Hugh of Ballintubber.]

Dermot.

Carbry.

Owen *Caech*.Felim *Geangach*.

&c., &c. .

In this sketch, Dr. O'Donovan discloses his view of Mr. Mat O'Connor's *defective* pedigree. He traces the Belanagare family from Denis O'Connor, M. P., to Denis O'Connor, of *Killintrany*, but no farther—the chain snaps there. He then takes a long step to Sir Hugh O'Connor, and gives his pedigree from the one preserved in the Royal Irish Academy, which, like the O'Kellys', was, no doubt, furnished to him, to be *easily* completed *en passant* in the county of Roscommon; but he leaves the misconceived

connexion between the Belanagare and the Balintubber families, to be supplied from the *Common-place Book*. It is thus that the Ordnance Survey pedigrees were compiled. *Any* pedigree was better than *none*; the rambling statements of talkative old women, or travelling tinkers, or the misrepresentations of such pedigree-manufacturers as got a hint of his genealogical researches, were sufficiently authentic for the "*historical collections*," intended to overthrow all that is known of the antiquities of Ireland, and to substitute new theories, on the slender support of ambiguous Irish manuscripts and modern invention. As for poor Dr. O'Connor, his affectionate brother Mr. Mat O'Connor and the learned Dr. O'Donovan unhesitatingly accuse him of ignorance and fabrication in his valuable writings. He had done too much for the antiquities of Ireland, to be allowed any reputation. John O'Donovan, in one of his letters, dated Elphin, 31st July, 1837, says—

“Dr. O'Connor calls Mageoghegan's History of Ire-

land a work below mediocrity; Mr. Moore will also sprinkle his history with innumerable petty blunders in topography and history, as he will *swallow* all Dr. O'Connor's *mistranslations* and *wilful fabrications*."

In another letter of his, dated 6th December, 1839, after commenting on a passage in the "Annals" under the year 898, as mistranslated by Dr. O'Connor, which seemed to sustain the (*since received**) opinion that the "Round Towers" were used by fire-worshippers to preserve the sacred fire, in which they worshipped God, he says—

"In translating this passage as he has it, Dr. O'Connor was obliged to *commit the crime of forgery* in decyphering the MS., and to *tell a lie* in the translation; an epithet of poor Coscragh was metamorphosed into a fire-worshipper's tower. Is it not extraordinary to find a learned Doctor come forward in

* "Essay on the Ancient History, Religion, Learning, Arts, and Government of Ireland," by John Dalton, Esq., Barrister-at-Law, M. R. I. A., vol. xvi., p. i. of the "Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy," p. 141-2, &c.

the first quarter of the nineteenth century to humbug antiquarians with such *forgeries* as the preceding ;* but any paltry shift to support a theory by which one makes himself famous or notorious : my only ambition is to be known to posterity as a detester of *forgers, fabricators, and liars* ; and more particularly

* Whatever faith may be conceded to the infallibility of this learned antiquary, we cannot hesitate to repel with scorn the vile imputation thus levelled from the cowardly ambush of a privileged communication. Dr. O'Connor was, we may admit, like all the antiquarian tribe, an enthusiast, and liable to the illusions of theory ; but it is not for a moment to be admitted that he could have stooped to the baseness of tampering with written documents, or forging evidence to authenticate a lie. Such acts are, indeed, not quite without modern precedent. The researches conducted by gentlemen like Dr. O'Connor with honesty and scholar-like accomplishment, seem to have changed hands, and degenerated into a trade in spurious documents, falsified names and dates, anonymous fabrications and opinions, shaped to order for the highest bidder. A bank-forgery may escape, or, what is more in point, a pocket may be picked with impunity ; but surely such impostures are as imbecile as they are base. The facts so disguised, if true, are matter of record ; they admit of no unauthenticated proof, but are in the strictest degree subject to the severest rules of evidence, and admit no anonymous witnesses. The credentials of historic evidence are the written record, the annals, and the monuments. If such can be verified, these ingenious resources are needless ; if not, they only betray a purpose of imposture.

of those who wish to make the world believe that they are possessed of knowledge of which they are entirely ignorant.

“Your dutiful and obedient servant,

“J. O'DONOVAN.

“*To T. A. Larcom, Esq., C.E.*”*

Dr. O'Donovan, having received his instructions from his “worthy friend,” gives his account of the O'Connors of Ballintubber, in his “Annals of Ireland,” as follows:—

“*O'Conor Don.* This family is now represented by the member for Roscommon, Denis, the son of Owen, son of Denis, son of Charles, the historian; son of Donough *Liath*, son of Cathal, son of *Cathal*, son of Hugh O'Conor Don, of Ballintubber. The only other surviving members of this family are Denis O'Conor of Mount Druid, Arthur O'Conor of Elphin, and Matthew O'Conor, sons of Mathew, son of

* The foregoing letters are bound up with the Ordnance Survey papers relating to each county, and deposited in the Royal Irish Academy—a species of state papers.

Denis, son of Charles, of Belanagare, the historian."*

Dr. O'Donovan also states, in his "Annals of Ireland," that—

"A bill of discovery had been filed against Denis *Liath* O'Connor, of Belanagare, by Mr. French, under the statute 1 Anne, 32; but that Terence Mac Donogh (of Creevagh, M. P. for Sligo in 1688, who died in 1713) managed to reply so ably, and being supported by the interest of Lords Kingsland and Taaffe, he succeeded in finally restoring Denis to 700 acres of land, which descended to his son, Charles O'Connor, of Belanagare."

This is mere invention. Denis O'Connor got Belanagare from John French, of French-park, by a conveyance on record in 1720, long after the death of Mac Donogh, which occurred in 1713!†

* Vol iii. p. 1830, note w.

† It was Hugh O'Connnor, brother of Charles O'Connor, of Belanagare, who, on the 24th January, 1777, read his recantation before John, Archbishop of Dublin, became a Protestant, and

Now, under all circumstances, it seems reasonable, in tracing the descent of Irish Roman Catholic families from the sixteenth century, to adopt the traditional accounts of their ancestors, when corroborated in important particulars by evidence about which there can be no reasonable doubt, and uncontradicted by any receivable evidence, or palpable inconsistency; and on that view, I shall proceed with the strictest impartiality to trace the descendants of the O'Connors of Connaught, from their acknowledged representatives who sat in the Irish Parliament of 1585, and executed deeds of composition with Queen Elizabeth, as the chiefs of their respective names.

Hugh O'Connor *dun*, of Ballintubber Castle, son of Dermot, son of Carbry, son of Owen *Caech*, son of Felim *geangach*, son of Turlogh O'Connor

sought to recover his brother's property, under the 1 Anne, 32. See Roll of Conformists, 15, No. 50, and Coxe's Magazine, vol. 8, p. 78.

*dun** (the first O'Connor *dun*), who, we have seen, was lineally descended from Cathal *Crovderg* O'Connor, was knighted in the year 1599 by the Earl of Essex, and became Sir Hugh O'Connor. The tradition of the family is, that he married a daughter of Sir Bryan O'Rourke of Brefny, by whom he had three sons: 1, Charles, who married Mary, daughter of Theobald Bourke (who, in 1626, was raised to the peerage as Viscount Bourke, of Mayo), by his wife, Maud, a daughter of O'Connor Sligo, by whom he left an elder son, Hugh, who died in 1662, and a younger son, Charles, of whom no record has been preserved; and the issue of Charles, the eldest son of Sir Hugh, is said to have become extinct.

2. Hugh O'Connor, of Castlerea, who left a son, Daniel, who married Lady Harriet O'Brien, and left a son, Andrew, who left a son, Daniel,

* Connellan's "Annals of the Four Masters," ad ann. 1585 and 1474.

who left three sons—I. Dominick; II. Alexander; III. Thomas; and two daughters—I. Jane, who married William Eccles, Esq.; and, II. Elizabeth. Dominick O'Connor became seized of the lands of Clonalis, under a patent from Charles II. (the estates which he derived from Sir Hugh O'Connor having been confiscated), and by his will devised same unto his brothers successively in strict settlement, with remainder to Denis O'Connor, of Belanagare, for life, with remainder to his eldest son, Owen O'Connor, of Belanagare, and his brothers successively in strict settlement, with remainder to Denis O'Connor, of Willsbrook, and the several other members of the Corrasduna branch of the family successively in strict settlement, with remainder to Peter O'Connor of Tumona (the then representative of the Castleruby O'Connor family), in strict settlement, as therein set forth, by his said will disinheriting his own nephew the son of his sister Jane, whose grandson, Alexander O'Connor Eccles, is now the heir at

law, and true representative of Hugh O'Connor, second son of Sir Hugh. It is under this will, and not by descent, that the late Owen O'Connor, of Belanagare, took the estate of Cloonalis.

3. Bryan *rue* O'Connor, of Corranduna, who married Mary, daughter of Hugh *Mirgagh* O'Connor, of Castleruby, who is named O'Connor *rue* in the "Annals of the Four Masters," A. D. 1597, by whom he left a son, Roger (i. e. Roderic). To this Bryan O'Connor, a captain in the service of Charles II., Sir Hugh had given the lands of *Beagh*, *Cloonykerny*, and *Cloonyvindin*, in the immediate vicinity of Ballintubber (containing, by Ordnance Survey, over 900 acres), not a mile from the Castle of Ballintubber, which lands Bryan O'Connor forfeited in the rebellion of 1641; but by a decree of the Court of Claims, at Athlone, in 1655, the two first-named denominations, containing 722 acres, were adjudged to his widow, Mary O'Connor,

for life, with remainder to her son, Roger O'Connor, in fee, *as the estate of his ancestors.*

Roger O'Connor married Elizabeth O'Shaughnessy, of Gort, in the county of Galway; and being attainted in 1691, his said estates were again confiscated, and sold at Chichester House, Dublin, A. D. 1703, when they were purchased by Colonel Henry Sandford, in trust for James Walker. Roderic O'Connor, having attained the rank of Colonel in the service of James II., passed over to France with a regiment (of rapparees), raised by his own influence, and entered the French service, no doubt expecting to return with James II., and to reap the advantages of his enthusiastic loyalty on his Majesty's restoration. He was ultimately appointed to the command of the third brigade of the reformed officers of the Irish Infantry Regiment of Lee.* He died in 1730, at Douay, in France, leaving

* "Illustrations of King James's Irish Army List," by John D'Alton, Esq., Barrister, vol. i., p. 142.

a son, Owen O'Connor, of Corrasduna,* and several daughters, two of whom became chanoinesses in France; another married Louis, Marquis de Vienne; and their son, when twenty-two years of age, visited his relations in Ireland, died of small-pox, at Miltown, the seat of his cousin, Thomas O'Connor, and was interred in Ballintubber, near the crumbling walls of the old castle, once the residence of his royal ancestors. Another of Owen O'Connor's sisters, Margaret O'Connor, married Redmond Fallon, of Ballina House, in the county of Roscommon, and is named in the family pedigree of that *family*, which was drawn up by their son, Redmond, as one of the daughters of Colonel Roderic O'Connor and Elizabeth O'Shaughnessy. He also erected a monument in the churchyard of Dysart, their family burial-place, commemorating his own wife, and his father and mother, Redmond Fallon, and Margaret Fallon, alias

* In the immediate vicinity of the Castle of Ballintubber. See Map annexed to this Memoir.

O'Connor.* Owen O'Connor, the only son of Colonel Roderic O'Connor, married Catherine, daughter of Major Edmond Mac Dermot,† of Emlagh, in the county of Roscommon, ancestor of the Mac Dermots of Springfield, in the county of Galway, by whom he had four sons, and three daughters.

* "Illustrations of King James's Irish Army List," vol. ii., p. 697.

† Dr. O'Connor, in his "Life and writings of Charles O'Connor, of Belanagare," mentions that Major Mac Dermot, of Emlagh, the father-in-law of Owen O'Connor, of *Corrasduna*, was the person alluded to by Goldsmith, in his "Deserted Village," in the following lines :—

"The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by the fire, and talked the night away;
Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,
Shoulder'd his crutch, and show'd how fields were won."

He states that he had the anecdote from Charles O'Connor, of Belanagare, who often saw Major Mac Dermot, and enjoyed his society so much, that he repeatedly spoke of him, even in his last years, as a person whom he never could forget, on account of the vivacity of his temper, and the affecting emotions with which he could tell the history of his own adventures; and that the goodness of his heart procured him the friendship of Goldsmith.

I. Roderic O'Connor, of Ballycahir, in the county of Roscommon, Esq., who married a daughter of John Fallon, of Cloonagh, in the said county, Esq., and is now represented by Roderic O'Connor, of Galway, Esq., his grandson.

II. Thomas O'Connor, of Miltown, in the said county of Roscommon, Esq., who attained the rank of major in the French service; served as High Sheriff of the county of Roscommon; and married Mary, daughter of Gerald Dillon, of Dillon's-grove, in the county of Roscommon, Esq., and is now represented by Roderic O'Connor, his grandson, of Miltown, in the said county, Esq., Barrister-at-Law, who served as Sheriff of the said county, in the year 1839.

III. Denis O'Connor, of Willsbrook, in the county of Roscommon, Esq., who married Sarah, daughter of William Irwin, of Leabeg, in the said county, Esq., and is now represented

by Michael O'Connor (his grandson), of Willsbrook, in the said county, Esq.

IV. Bernard, in holy orders.

I. Catherine, who married Hugh O'Connor, brother of Charles O'Connor, of Belanagare (son of Denis O'Connor, of Killintrany).

II. Mary, who married Joseph Plunket, uncle of Colonel Plunket, of Castleplunket, in the county of Roscommon. Their daughter, Elizabeth, married James Dillon, a celebrated surgeon, of Moore-street, Dublin, and left a son, Michael Dillon, a Captain in the county of Dublin Militia, who was killed at the battle of Ross, in 1798. He was a great favourite in the O'Connor family. He married a daughter of the Rev. Richard Griffith, and by her left a son, Michael James Robert Dillon, twelfth Earl of Roscommon, who obtained the title by a decree of the House of Lords, on the 19th June, 1828.

III. Sabina.

Teige *oge* O'Connor *rue*, who executed the deed of composition with Queen Elizabeth, on the 3rd October, 1585, *as the chief of his name*,* is stated, in the "Annals of the Four Masters," to have been son of Teige *buidhe*, son of Cathal *rue*,† son of Roderic, son of Bryan *ballagh*,‡ son of Hugh, son of Felim, who fell at Athenry.§ Turlogh *rue*, the brother of Teige *oge* O'Connor, had two sons, Hugh and John. Hugh (named *Mirgagh*) O'Connor, of Castleruby, in the county of Roscommon, is mentioned by the annalists as O'Connor *rue*, in 1597. He had a son, Teige, and a daughter, Mary (wife of Bryan O'Connor, of Corrasduna). Teige had a son, Roderic, who had a son, Michael, who had a son, John, whose son, Peter O'Connor, of Tumona, in the parish of Ogulla, and county of Roscommon, Esq., was the acknowledged legal representative of Teige

* See page 45.

† Ad ann. 1585.

‡ Ad ann. 1488.

§ Ad ann. 1418.

oge O'Connor *rue*, and died without issue, leaving his niece, Maria French, of Larch-grove, in the county of Roscommon, his heiress, the legal representative of the Castleruby family.*

John O'Connor, second son of Turlogh *rue* O'Connor, left a son, named Teige, born in 1660, who lived at Clonfree, in the county of Roscommon. He married a daughter of O'Brennan, and left a son, Denis, born in 1690, who married a daughter of O'Hanly, of *Slievebann*, lived to the age of 70, and was interred in the churchyard of Lissonuffy, in the barony of Roscommon. He had two sons, Teige and Charles. His son, Teige, born in 1726, married

* The following inscription, curiously carved, may be seen on a stone in the old Abbey of Tulsk :—" Pray for the souls of Roger O'Connor, of the ancient family of Castleruby, Esq., and Anne O'Connor, alias Crofton, of Mote, his wife, and for the souls of such of their ancestors and posterity as dyed, or will dye, in a redeemable state. This monument was erected by the order of Michael O'Connor, Esq., remainder man of said family, and his wife, Bridget O'Connor, alias Farrell, of the family of Ardanra, the 2nd May, 1755."

a daughter of Forster, of Esker, county of Dublin, died in 1795, aged 69, and was interred in Cloontuskert. He left a son, Denis O'Connor, born in 1765, who married a daughter of Plunket, of Ardkeenagh, whose son, John, married a daughter of Costello, of Gurteen, near Coolavin, in the county of Sligo, who is the representative of the Lanesborough branch of the Castleruby O'Connor family. Denis O'Connor's second son, Charles, born in 1731, was seated at Ballagh, near Lanesborough, in the county of Roscommon, whose grandson, Denis O'Connor, of Ballagh, and Corrig-avenue, Kingstown, a gentleman of considerable property in the counties of Roscommon and Meath, is now the representative of this branch of the Lanesborough O'Connor family.

Sir Donal O'Connor, Sligo, who executed the deed of composition with Queen Elizabeth of the 23rd September, 1585, is stated in the "Annals of the Four Masters" to have been the

son of Teige, son of Cathal *oge*, son of Donal, son of Owen, son of Donal, son of Murtogh,* brother of Cathal O'Connor, who was King of Connaught, A. D. 1318. Murtogh was son of Donal, son of Teige, son of Bryan, son of Andrew, son of Bryan *Luighneach*, son of Turlogh *more* O'Connor.† Sir Donal O'Connor, Sligo, died in 1588, and his nephew, named Donogh, "The O'Connor, Sligo," in a royal patent of 1603, purporting to be a roll of general pardon to the inhabitants of Sligo, died in 1609, leaving a son, Charles, who died in 1634, without issue. Sir Donal had two brothers, Murtogh *boccagh*, and Melaghlin, with a daughter, Una, who married Francis French, ancestor of the Lords de Freyne, of French-park, in the county of Roscommon. Murtogh had a son, Teige, whose lands of Anagh, now Hazlewood, were confiscated in 1620. He left a son, Charles, who had two sons, Martin and Murtogh. Martin's eld-

* Ad. ann. 1585.

† Ad ann. 1324.

est son, Owen, was attainted in 1691, whereupon he removed to Carrowlustia, where his eldest son, Denis, was born in 1681, he died in 1757, leaving a son, Cathal, also born at Carrowlustia, where he died in 1787. Cathal's eldest son, Denis, was also born at Carrowlustia, and died in 1836, leaving a numerous family—1, Connell O'Connor, still living; his children emigrated to America; 2, Patrick O'Connor, who died, leaving a numerous family; 3, John O'Connor, also dead, who left two sons; 4, James, who died, unmarried, at Trinidad; 5, Peter O'Connor, of Cairnsfoot, in the county of Sligo, Esq., J.P., a gentleman of considerable property in that county.

It is not within the scope of the foregoing Memoir to trace the descent of any family, save those descended from one or other of the *three* leading branches, whose acknowledged representatives, O'Connor *dun*, O'Connor *rue*, and O'Connor *Sligo*, compounded for their estates

with Queen Elizabeth, in 1585, as *the chiefs of their respective names*. However, as Charles Owen O'Connor, of Clonalis, M. P. for the county of Roscommon, claims to be "head of the ancient house of the O'Conors of Connaught, and lineally descended from O'Conor, King of Connaught, and Monarch of Ireland,"* it becomes my duty to explain the grounds on which I have not noticed his family. His claim lies within very narrow limits. He claims descent from Denis O'Connor, of Killintrany, in the county of Sligo, who, it is alleged in his family pedigree, was descended from Charles O'Connor, of Belanagare, who is said to have been the *third son* of Sir Hugh O'Connor, of Ballintubber Castle (the O'Connor *dun* above mentioned), from whom, it is asserted, "he obtained the castle and estate of Belanagare, on his intermarriage with Anne O'Molloy, daughter of

* "The County Families of the United Kingdom," by Edward Walford, A. M. London, 1860.

William O'Molloy, Esq.,"* and thus became the *founder* of that family. This statement involves *three* distinct and equally essential conditions, which I shall consider separately.

1st. That Sir Hugh O'Connor had a third son, named *Charles*. The pedigree compiled, published, and also deposited in the office of the Ulster King of Arms, in the Castle of Dublin, gives Sir Hugh O'Connor four sons—1, Calvach; 2, Hugh, of *Castlerea*; 3, Charles, of *Belanagare*; 4, Bryan *roe*, of *Corrasduna*. On the other hand, the pedigree compiled from public records, of unquestionable authenticity, gives Sir Hugh O'Connor only three sons, as follows:—

1. Charles O'Connor *dun*.
2. Hugh O'Connor, of *Castlerea*.
[No second Charles.]
3. Bryan O'Connor, of *Corrasduna*.

* Hardiman's "West Connaught" (on the authority of Matthew O'Conor, of Mount-Druid, Esq.), page 138.

Now, it is evident that if Sir Hugh O'Connor's eldest son's *Christian name* was *Charles*, that he had no third son who bore the same *Christian name*, and that Charles O'Connor, of Belanagare, could not have been his son. The following proofs establish that his eldest son's name was *Charles O'Connor dun*, and leave no room for controversy on the subject :—

PROOFS.

By an inquisition, taken at Tulske, on the 21st January, 1616, before Sir Charles Coote, Knight, and another, of the estates of the O'Connors, and others, subject to composition rents, the jury finds Sir Hugh O'Connor seised in fee of the Castle of Ballintubber, of Rathnallige, *Beagh*, Clewboybeg, Rossmene, *Cloonykerny*, Clooneclabin, Ardnamullagh, Ballynagieher, Ballyfinegan, Ballymaglin, Knockroe, Lislaghna, Lisboy, Creeghneballagh, Ballyglass, Ballagh, and Carroweskeagh.

And *Charles O'Connor dun*, of Knockalaghta, seised in fee of Carrowreagh, Carrowbane, Rammeige, Brocklowne, Knockalaghta, Farbreege, Carrowgarrow, Lisgobane, Ballintubber, Carrowkeele, Ardaslagh, Carrowmore, and Knockevarra.

And Hugh *oge* O'Connor, of Castlerea, seised in fee of the Castle and site of the town of Castlerea, of Tralagh, Ballendromlea, Derrynevenagh, Cloonagh, Clownmalush, Correlaghen, Clownbunnagh, Annaghclogha, Annagheva-ghery, Clownfower, Clownecon, Clownsucka, Clownelta, Toghnara, Mewlaghmore, Mewlaghbeg, Rathvarnagh, Carrowdowane, Gangroade, Rathclary, and Clownree.

And John O'Kelly, of Carrowindirry, seised in fee, *by way of mortgage*, from Sir Hugh O'Connor, of Magn.

And Christopher Kirwan, of Galway, seised

in fee, *by way of mortgage*, from Sir Hugh O'Connor, of Rathcarron, Castlehine, Ardnamullagh, and *Clonyvendeene*.

And the jury likewise finds Hugh Mirgagh O'Connor, of Castlerone (Castleruby), seised in fee of Castlerone, Corneboy, Carrowkeille, and Mulloghgollane.

And Gilleboy O'Flanagan, seised in fee of the town and lands of Rathleig and Rahardevin, with other lands thereinnamed.

The finding of the jury in the foregoing inquisition, as regards the O'Connors of Ballintubber, must have been founded on the *claims* and *deeds* of their family, and the evidence submitted by them or their agents; and affords conclusive evidence of their true *Christian names*, and residences, and of their *estates*, and the incumbrances affecting them, so far as they are therein set forth.

By another inquisition, taken at Roscommon, on the 26th of March, 1632, after the death of Sir Hugh O'Connor, the jury finds that Sir Hugh O'Connor died on the 27th January, 1632, seised of the castle, manor, town, and lands of Ballintubber, and of other townlands therein mentioned; and that *Charles O'Connor dun*, his heir at law, was then 40 years of age, and married. Here again we have the *Christian name*, and also the age of Sir Hugh's eldest son, who must have been 24 years of age at the time of the first-mentioned inquisition of 1616. His second son could not then have been more than 23 years of age; and if Sir Hugh had another son then provided for, his estate would also have been included, and found in that inquisition; but Major Owen O'Connor, the son of *Charles O'Connor* of Belanagare, (the supposititious son of Sir Hugh), was a Major in the service of Charles I. in and previous to 1641—how could he be the grandson of Sir Hugh?

By an inquisition taken at Athlone, before Sir Charles Coote, Bart., on 22nd October, 1627, Hugh O'Connor *rue* is found seised in fee of Cartron (in the parish of *Elphin*), Rathroe (in the parish of *Shankill*), Clonardbeg (in the parish of *Tibohine*), Cashell and Brackloon (in the parish of *Kilcorkey*), and other lands therein named.

By an inquisition, taken at Charlestown, on the 8th of September, 1634, before Henry Bingham, the jury finds William O'Flanagan seised in fee of Edenane, Drishaghane, and other lands, in the parish of *Shankill*, in *Clann Cahill*.*

In 1641, Captain Bryan O'Connor forfeited the townlands of *Beagh*, *Cloonykerny*, and *Cloonyvindin* (situated in the immediate neighbour-

* See the map annexed to this Memoir for the *parishes* of *Kilcorkey*, *Shankill*, and *Kilmacumsey*, which, with parts of the *parishes* of *Creeve* and *Elphin*, formed *Clann Cahill*, the territory of O'Flanagan and O'Connor *rue*.

hood of the Castle of Ballintubber), whereof Sir Hugh was found seised in fee by the inquisition of 1616; and he is described in the record of the forfeiture as “brother of Charles O'Connor *dun*.” Here again we have the *Christian name* of Sir Hugh O'Connor's *eldest* son, and also evidence that Bryan O'Connor, *his brother*, was *then* a Captain in the service of Charles I.

By a deposition, amongst the “depositions of Protestants,” &c., preserved in the MS. Library of Trinity College, Dublin, F. 2, 2, “Elizabeth Hollywell, relict of William Hollywell, of the town of Roscommon, Clk., saith, that it was an ordinary and common report by and amongst the rebels of the county of Roscommon, that *Charles O'Connor dun, of Ballintubber, Esquire*, was made King of Connaught, and one Charles Delahyde, Esq., a Justice of Peace, and a papist told deponent that all the rebell soldiers thereabouts were gone to Tulks to make the

said *Charles O'Connor dun* King of Connaught.”
—Jurat, 10th April, 1643.*

In Cromwell's Act of 1652 for settling Ireland, which exempts certain persons therein enumerated from *pardon*, *Charles O'Connor dun, of Ballintubber, Esq.*, is specially named.

It is established by the foregoing records, that Sir Hugh O'Connor's eldest son was named *Charles O'Connor*; and an assertion that his eldest son was named *Charles*, his second, Hugh, and his third, *Charles*, is totally incredible.

It deserves notice, though not as evidence, that Dr. O'Donovan, in one of his publications, mentions Sir Hugh's eldest son as *Charles*

* This deposition, taken behind the back of *Charles O'Connor dun*, though not evidence against *him*, affords abundant evidence that he was well known in the county of Roscommon as *Charles O'Connor dun*.

O'Connor. In his "Tribes of Ireland," a translation of Aenghus O'Daly's scandalously satirical Irish poem, we find the following stanza, and notes appended thereto :—

"The house is not in meet condition,
The house of *Cathal O'Conor*.¹
Children and wife are in distress there.
A house without corn or drink.²
The devil a killer of beeves
Is this day in the plain of Connacht,³
Except the small plunderer of Cruachain,⁴
And another Snouty of Leitrim."⁵

¹ *Cathal O'Conor*, i. e. Charles O'Conor, of Ballintober Castle, county of Roscommon.

² *Drink*.—*Añlann*, in Ireland, means kitchen-stuff, or any kind of soup, broth, dip, or *blind-herring*, that enables one to swallow bread, or potatoes.

³ The bard evidently intends the term to denote all the rich plains of Connacht.

⁴ *Plunderer of Cruachain*, i. e. O'Conor Don.

⁵ *Snouty of Leitrim*.—O'Rourke, of Leitrim Castle, at this time a very stout rebel; this was Bryan *oge*, who died in 1604. His father, Brian na Murtha, was hanged and beheaded in London, A. D. 1591.*

This slanderous Irish poet, O'Daly, was not, it would seem, hospitably received by the lady

* "Tribes of Ireland," p. 36.

of O'Shaughnessy; and in reference to her he sarcastically says—

“ I satirize but good women,”

(therefore) that he had not satirized her. On this passage Dr. O'Donovan appended a note, in which he states that the Lady had two children by Sir Roger O'Shaughnessy before her marriage; and that later members of the same family were unfortunate in their choice of wives, as Colonel William O'Shaughnessy went to France after the restoration, where he died in 1744, whose wife, a daughter of Lord Clare, lived with her own butler, William *buidhe* O'Kelly, after his departure.*

Aenghus O'Daly died on the 16th December, 1617.† He was stabbed by the command of O'Meagher, chief of Ikerrin, at the rudeness of whose mansion he had made some scurrilous remarks.‡ Hence his Irish poem was written

* Idem, p. 41.

† Idem, p. 27.

‡ Idem, p. 23.

about the same time as the inquisition of 1616, above quoted; and the *Charles O'Connor* named was, as O'Donovan states, Charles O'Connor of Ballintubber, the eldest son of Sir Hugh.

Let us now see whether Charles O'Connor of Belanagare was in reality the *original founder* of that family. The pedigree of his family stands thus:—Owen Felim O'Connor, of Belanagare (usually named Major Owen O'Connor), was son of Charles O'Connor and Anne O'Connor, otherwise Mulloy, his wife, who was son of Owen O'Connor (the juror of 1585), of Belanagare,* beyond whom the family cannot now be traced, as the erroneous pedigree compiled by Denis O'Connor, of Killintrany, and his son, Charles O'Connor, of Belanagare, extinguished the light of tradition, and left the family without any knowledge of its descent. Thus the inquisition of 1585 demonstrates

* Page 46-47.

that Charles O'Connor could not have been the *founder* of a pre-existing family; and it would be absurd to suppose that Owen O'Connor, the contemporary of the *three* acknowledged representatives of the O'Connors *dun*, O'Connors *rue*, and O'Connors *Sligo* (in 1585), *could be the descendant of either of them*. Major Owen O'Connor, of Belanagare, left two daughters, who were both married; but no account is given in the pedigree of the family, of their descendants, amongst whom the representative of the family must be sought. The descendants of Denis O'Connor, of Killintrany, can only claim to be *a collateral branch* of his family.

It remains to see whether Sir Hugh O'Connor, of Ballintubber, ever had any estate or interest in the castle and lands of Belanagare, or in any of the estates of the Belanagare family.

Major Owen O'Connor was a major in the service of Charles I., in and previous to the year

1641, and was by the 14th and 15th of Charles II., ch. 2 (amongst others therein named), declared entitled to be restored to his estates *for his services beyond seas*. He accordingly proceeded before the commissioners appointed to carry out the provisions of that statute, and in a cause in which Sir William Domville, as Attorney-General for Ireland, and others, were defendants, claimed to be restored to the possession of his estates in the parish of *Kilcorkey*, and elsewhere, whereof he was seised and possessed on the 2nd October, 1641, *and for many years before, by descent from his ancestors*, and obtained a decree to be restored to the possession of same, except as to the lands of *Cluneagunean*, in the barony of Boyle, which had been assigned to *Patrick French* (a transplanted person), which still remain in the possession of his descendant, Lord De Freyne.* The

* Decree pronounced by the aforesaid commissioners, on Saturday, the 15th August, in the 15th year of the reign of Charles II., Roll. x., M. 5.

predatory wars, between Felim Fionn O'Connor *rue*, and O'Connor *dun*, of Ballintubber, in the fifteenth century, as recorded in the "Annals of the Four Masters," so clearly demonstrate the local position of Felim *Fionn* at that period, that the able translator, in the topographical and historical map annexed thereto, inserted the name "*O'Connor rue*" precisely over the lands of *Belanagare*, in the *parish of Kilcorkey*, which forms the northern extremity of the barony of Ballintubber.*

And Dr. O'Donovan has, as already stated, shown that the parish of *Kilcorkey* formed part of *Clann Cahill*, the territory of O'Flanagan and O'Connor *rue*, in which Sir Hugh O'Connor never had any lands. The lands of *Belanagare* were manifestly brought into settlement on the intermarriage of Charles O'Connor with Anne, daughter of William Mulloy, as appears

* See map, taken therefrom, annexed to this Memoir.

from an entry in the "Book of Survey and Distribution," in the year 1641, "that William Mulloy then held the estate of Belanagare to the use of Owen O'Connor, his grandchild, whereupon it was conveyed to Major Owen O'Connor." Major Owen O'Connor was also restored to the possession of *Rathleig* and *Rahardevine*, as part of the lands which he claimed by descent from his ancestors; and they were found (as already mentioned) vested in fee in Gilliboy O'Flanagan by the inquisition of 1616; it is obvious these lands descended to him from his grandfather, Owen O'Connor, of Belanagare (of 1585), who, in all probability, was connected with Gilliboy O'Flanagan's family, the O'Flanagans of *Clann Cahill*; but it is absurd to suppose that any of these lands ever belonged to Sir Hugh O'Connor, whose territory and lands lay in the *parishes* of *Ballintubber*, *Kilkeevin*, and *Drumatemple*, in the southern extremity of the barony of Ballintubber; while *Clann Cahill*, which formed the territory of O'Flanagan and

O'Connor *rue*, consisted of the *parishes* of *Kilcorkey*, *Kilmacumsey*, and *Shankill* (with some undefined portions of the parishes of *Creeve* and *Elphin*). The boundaries of the former are traced in brown, and those of the latter in red, in the map taken from the Ordnance Survey, annexed to this Memoir. It is, perhaps, worth mentioning, that although the late Owen O'Connor, of Belanagare, and his brothers, Charles O'Connor, D.D., and Mathew O'Connor, were ignorant of their own descent, having received the erroneous pedigree handed down to them as unexceptionable, that they were very well acquainted with the descendants of the Ballintubber family. Charles O'Connor, D. D., who was Parish Priest of *Kilkeevin*, and Chaplain of Dominick O'Connor *dun*, of Clonalis, wrote the following letter to Denis O'Connor, of Willsbrook (of the *Corrasduna* family) whose residence may be seen on the map, between Ballintubber and Clonalis :—

“ MY DEAR COUSIN,—I must trouble you with those

lines to send you the inclosed papers, and to beg you will show them to such of your friends as you may think are corrupted by political bigotry, or cramped by the influence of slavery or oppression (*burn this*). I have been obliged, by numberless applications, to establish a general rule, that no stranger should come in upon us on Christmas day to give mass in the parish. I assure you they keep very clear of us at all other times, and would be very backward in giving the least assistance in the administration of a parish. Mr. Mac Dermot, to suit your convenience, will, if you please, give your family prayers on Christmas day, about 10 o'clock. This mass will serve for the people of Anagh, Cloonroughan, Cloonavindin, &c. Please let me know per bearer your sentiments on this head. As I am to have a mass at convenience in future, Mr. Mac Dermot or I will occasionally give you mass on Sundays and holidays in future, according as may suit your convenience. I hope you need not be told there is no one more anxious to serve you in all such particulars than your affectionate kinsman,

“CH. O'CONOR.

“*To Denis O'Conor, Esq., Willsbrook.*”

Charles O'Connor, D. D., also gave a pedigree of his family, in his "Life and writings of Charles O'Connor, of Belanagare," in which he gave Sir Hugh O'Connor four sons, as already named, and stated that Sir Hugh O'Connor left his son, Bryan, the lands of *Beagh* and *Cloonykerny*. The brother of Charles O'Connor, of Belanagare, married a daughter of Owen O'Connor, of *Corrasduna* (near Ballintubber), and he was well acquainted with the different branches of the family. Again, Owen O'Connor, of Belanagare, deposited a pedigree of his family in the office of the Ulster King of Arms, at the Castle of Dublin, in which he gave Sir Hugh four sons, and designates the fourth as *Bryan roe O'Connor*, of *Corrasduna*.*

* This was the first pedigree ever given of the Killintrany family. It contains a minute and detailed account of the *numerous children* of each generation, from Donogh Liath, i. e. Denis O'Connor, of Killintrany, to his great grandson, Owen O'Connor, many of whom were in holy orders, or died young, leaving no trace of their existence, but in the traditional knowledge of the family, which shows with how much care and traditional knowledge it was compiled. It gives Denis, of Killantrany, *five* sons

The following canvassing letter, from Mr. O'Connor, of Mount Druid, to Roderick O'Connor, the heir at law, and representative of Owen O'Connor, of Corrasduna, discloses his knowledge of the *Corrasduna family* in very unmistakeable terms:—

“ MOUNT DRUID, 30th July, 1847.

“ MY DEAR RODERICK,—An old friend, relative, and namesake, must feel interested in the approaching struggle. Your support and influence will oblige me. Pat (i. e. Roderick's brother) is working like a man. Should you know any stray votes (£50 votes) in your neighbourhood, pray secure them for your friend,

“ DENIS O'CONNOR.

“ *To Roderick O'Connor, Esq.,*

“ *Rahoon House, Galway.*”

and *four* daughters; Charles, his son, *one* daughter and *two* sons; and Denis, his son, *eight* sons and *seven* daughters, with the dates of their births, deaths, and marriages. Well might Owen O'Connor certify that it contained a true account of his family, “to the best of his knowledge and belief.”

Owen O'Connor, of Belanagare, was universally esteemed an upright and honourable man, of inflexible integrity. He took an active part in the long struggle for Catholic emancipation, and attained a very prominent position in the agitation and proceedings carried on for that purpose. His sacrifices, both of time and money, were neither forgotten nor unrewarded. He was elected by the liberal electors, and the powerful influence of the French-park family, as the Roman Catholic representative in Parliament of the county of Roscommon; and it cannot be doubted but that he considered himself the legal representative of the O'Connors of Ballintubber, and "head" of the O'Connor family, a position which nobody could claim. He could be "head" of no family but his own; each branch of the wide-spread O'Connor family had its own "head." The days of *clannship* and *chieftainship* are gone. The Irish chieftain was elected, so was the Scotch.* The existence of

* Sir Walter Scott's "History of Scotland," vol. i., p. 49.

an Irish chieftain at present is impossible; and all such claims are *sheer nonsense*. All Owen O'Connor's assumptions rested upon the erroneous supposition that he was the legal representative of the Ballintubber family, with which it is now indisputably proved he was in no way connected. Any person disposed to controvert those proofs, has a right to do so. The Ulster King-of-Arms is the legally constituted authority to decide the question. He is a judge of considerable experience—a barrister who can appreciate the value of evidence, and a gentleman of acknowledged literary attainments. His decision will satisfy all parties concerned. The extensive references of an eminent antiquarian have recently been procured for the guidance of the learned adviser of the Mount Druid family, who must, with such aid, “know where to look” for evidence to meet the case. I sincerely wish him every success, having discussed the question with the utmost impartiality, and quoted nothing but *authentic evidence*.

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